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Social milieus and worldviews in Mamluk *adab*-encyclopedias: The example of poverty and wealth

by Thomas Herzog (Bern)

About the author

Thomas Herzog is an assistant professor in the Department of Islamic Studies at Bern University, Switzerland. He graduated in Arabic and Islamic Studies from Aix-en-Provence University (France) before moving to Halle University (Germany) where he wrote his doctoral dissertation "Genese, Überlieferung und Bedeutung der *Sīrat Baibars* in ihrem sozio-politischen Kontext" ("Origin, Transmission and Impact of the *Sīrat Baibars* in a Socio-Political Context") under the joint supervision of Stefan Leder and Jean-Claude Garcin. His thesis was published in 2006 in German as *Geschichte und Imaginaire* (*History and Imagination*).

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His topics of interest are the social and cultural history of the pre-modern Arab world, with a special focus on the Mamluk era; processes of exchange and synthesis between "elite" and "popular" cultures; written and oral literatures; dialect and *koïné*; literary *imaginaries* and representations of social groups and spaces; Arab collective memory and strategies of narrative re-construction of the past in historiography and in "scholarly" and "popular" *adab*.

Recent Publications

- "Mamluk (Popular) Culture – the State of Research," in: *Ubi sumus? Quo vademus? Mamluk Studies – State of the Art*, ed. Stephan Conermann, Bonn: V&R UniPress 2014 (forthcoming).
- "Figuren der Bettler," *Asiatische Studien* LXV-1 (2011) 67-94.
- "Orality and the Tradition of Arabic Epic Storytelling," in: *Medieval Oral Literature*, ed. Karl Reich, New York/Berlin: De Gruyter 2012, pp. 628-649.
- "La mémoire des invasions mongoles dans la *Sīrat Baybars*: Persistances et transformations dans l'imaginaire populaire arabe," in: *Le Bilâd al-Shâm face aux mondes extérieurs (XIe-XIVe s.). La perception de l'autre et la représentation du souverain*, eds. Denise Aigle and Katia Zakharia, Damascus: Institut Français du Proche Orient 2013, pp. 203-222.
- "'What they saw with their own eyes…' – Fictionalization and 'Narrativization' of History in Arab Popular Epics and Learned Historiography," in: *Fictionalizing the Past*, ed. Sabine Dorpmüller, Cairo: American University of Cairo Press 2012, pp. 25-43.

Abstract

The economic and cultural rise of parts of the *ʿāmma* due to the particular economic and infrastructural conditions of the Mamluk era fostered the emergence of new intermediate levels of literature that were situated between the literature of the elite and that of the utterly ignorant and unlettered populace, between the Arabic *koiné* (*al-ʿarabiyya al-fuṣḥā*) and the local dialects (*ʿāmmiyya*-s), between written and oral composition, performance and transmission. The following paper proposes to analyze the composition of three Mamluk *adab*-encyclopedias and their treatment of poverty and wealth in light of the social milieus of their authors and publics.

1. The rise of a new class

When the Mamluks took power between 1250 and 1260 in the former Ayyūbid lands of Egypt and Syria, the Mongol invasions and the assassination of the Abbasid caliph in Baghdad as well as the ongoing Crusader presence in Palestine all brought about a shift in the eastern Islamic world's center to Mamluk Egypt, which became a highly effective bulwark of Arab-Islamic rule and culture. Many peasants, craftsmen and *ʿulamāʾ* from Iraq and the Bilād aš-Šām fled their homelands in the face of the Mongol invasion and sought refuge in the Mamluk Empire and especially in Cairo. There they merged a flourishing urban culture with a developed economy and educational system which benefited during large spans of Mamluk rule from the special socio-economic conditions appertaining to the ancient military slaves' reign. Protected from the "barbarism of the invaders,"[1] i.e. Mongols and Crusaders, Mamluk Egypt and Syria would indeed be the site of an extraordinary cultural flowering from the late thirteenth to the late fifteenth century – a flowering which produced a last great synthesis of Arab and Islamic culture before onset of the modern era.

The Mamluk Empire's economic strength, at least over large spans of its existence, along with the intense building activity of Mamluk sultans and emirs, not only enriched traditionally wealthy and influential families but allowed other groups to rise in Mamluk society. Indeed, one of the more important social phenomena occurring under Mamluk rule was the accession of craftsmen to a degree of wealth, power and education. As Doris Behrens-Abouseif has shown for the Circassian period of Mamluk rule,[2] such people as carpenters, stone-cutters, masons and coppersmiths were not only highly respected and well-paid[3] but rose to very high positions. The first Circassian Sultan aẓ-*Ẓ*āhir Barqūq deigned not once but twice to marry into the family of his chief architect, "*al-muʿallim*" Aḥmad aṭ-Ṭulūnī. In his turn, aṭ-Ṭulūnī, who already occupied the post of *šād al-ʿamāʾir*, or Supervisor of the Royal Constructions, was appointed an Amir of Ten and began to dress as a Mamluk; and his descendants would later shun their ancestor's "blue-collar" profession and become scholars and bureaucrats. "*Al-muʿallim*" Aḥmad aṭ-Ṭulūnī would seem to have been no exceptional case. Ibn Taġrībirdī (812/1409-10–874/1470) and Ibn Iyās (852/1448–ca. 930/1524) reported a number of similar upstart craftsmen, and Ibn Taġrībirdī in particular deplored the fact that posts originally reserved for Mamluks were increasingly occupied by non-Mamluks – by bureaucrats or even craftsmen. Ibn Taġrībirdī and Ibn Iyās did nothing to conceal their disdain toward the "riffraff" (*awbāš wa-aḥdāṯ*)[4] in their reports that a butcher became vizier[5] or that a market-merchant,[6] the owner of a sweetmeat shop and son of a carpenter[7] as well as a fur tailor[8] all rose to the post of Supervisor of the Pious Endowments (*nāẓir al-awqāf*) or that a coppersmith became secretary of the public treasury (*wakīl bayt al-māl*).[9] All this proves that these

[1] Garcin, *Le Proche-Orient*, 343.
[2] Abouseif, *Craftsmen and Upstarts*.
[3] Ibid., 73-74.
[4] Ibid., 69.
[5] Ibn Taġrībirdī, *Ḥawādiṯ*, 3:512 f., 4:771, 780 ff. See Abouseif, *Craftsmen and Upstarts*, 69.
[6] Ibn Taġrībirdī, *Nuğūm*, 15:388, 397. See Abouseif, ibid.
[7] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ*, 4:44 ff. See Abouseif, ibid., 72.
[8] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ*, 3:192, 209, 212, 382, 446. See Abouseif, ibid.
[9] See below the case of Abū l-Ḫayr an-Naḥḥās.

craftsmen and merchants of the fourteenth and fifteenth century had at least become wealthy enough to be able to buy their positions, which was a widespread practice under the Circassian Mamluks. But it seems to me that these historians were not only disconcerted by the fact that corruption permitted the ascent of formerly ostracized commoners (*ʿawām*) to high-ranking positions but that these parvenues blurred formerly clear-cut cultural divisions. Maybe it was for this reason that Ibn Taġrībirdī devoted some pages in his chronicle to and reserved all his contempt for one of his contemporaries, the coppersmith and *wakīl bayt al-māl* Abū l-Ḫayr an-Naḥḥās (d. 863/1459). What seems to have most annoyed him was the fact that even though Abū l-Ḫayr occupied one of the highest posts in the state hierarchy, he still looked and behaved (in his eyes) as a commoner, lacked the knowledge of a respectable *ʿālim*, and displayed his ignorance through his recitation of the Quran like a popular performer rather than as a professional reader.[10] Following Ibn Iyās' assessment of him, Abū l-Ḫayr adopted the conduct deemed appropriate for a scholar (*taḫallaqa bi-aḫlāq al-fuqahāʾ*)[11] and inscribed his name in the mausoleum he built for himself as Abū l-Ḫayr Muḥammad aṣ-Ṣūfī aš-Šāfiʿī, obviously trying to create the image of a *šāfiʿī* scholar and sufi. As complete fakery on Abū l-Ḫayr's part seems unlikely, Behrens-Abouseif concludes that Abū l-Ḫayr did in all likelihood acquire some basic madrasa knowledge at some point in his career.

Ibn Taġrībirdī's critique of social upstarts blurring formerly clear-cut cultural divisions finds a remarkable parallel in the complaint over half-educated, so-called scholars populating the madrasas, a lament echoed by a number of important authors since the end of the Ayyūbid period. The famous *mālikī* jurist Ibn al-Ḥāǧǧ (d. in Cairo 737/1336) fretted that "the Muslims have confused the scholars with the vulgar (*al-ʿāmmī*) without being able to distinguish between them" and that for some of the so-called scholars of his day, "quality, length and lavish cut of their clothes [were] the equivalent of science."[12] He further complained that most of those scholars were hypocrites whose way of life hardly corresponded to their teachings in the madrasa[13] and that most of them were more interested in business than in science: "Today the scholars swarm out when the sun rises so as to follow worldly purposes (*fī asbāb ad-dunyā*) and be mostly entirely lost in them. Only rarely do they leave such to come to the mosques and teach. Normally the teaching scholar is supposed to be in the mosque after the morning-prayer."[14] Some thirty years later Tāǧ ad-Dīn as-Subkī used roughly the same language to bemoan the worldly motives of many scholars[15] and to criticize the fact that some teachers in the madrasas either only knew how to recite two or three lines of a book without being able to interpret them, or that they did in fact know more but lazily refrained from teaching what they knew: "But the worst ill is the teacher who only knows two or three lines of book by heart, who sits down, recites them and then rises to go away. If he is incapable of doing more than this then he is not suited for teaching and it is not right that he take wages for this. For in reality he has failed his teaching post and his salary has not been honestly

[10] Ibn Taġrībirdī, *Ḥawādiṯ*, 1:35, 49 54, 68, 76f., 80f., 84; 2: 329, 392; 3: 408, 410-23, 658. Idem, *Nuǧūm* 15:375f., 382, 395-401,418-22, 429, 441; 16:131, 132, 133, 210f. See Abouseif, "Craftsmen and Upstarts," 69-71.
[11] Ibn Iyās, *Badāʾiʿ*, 3:192, 209, 212, 382, 446. See Abouseif, ibid.
[12] Ibn al-Ḥāǧǧ, *Madḫal*, 1:155. See also Leder, *Postklassisch*, 301-302.
[13] Ibn al-Ḥāǧǧ, ibid.
[14] Ibid., 207.
[15] Tāǧ ad-Dīn as-Subkī, *Muʿīd*, 96; German translation by Rescher, *Über die moralischen Pflichten*, 59-60.

earned."[16] What is interesting is the reason as-Subkī gives for criticizing these teachers: "This only opens the way for the commoners (*al-ʿawām*) to desire these posts; for few are the commoners who do not know two or three lines by heart. If ever the scholars would shield science and if the teaching scholar would give teaching what it deserves … [then] commoners, beginners and those in the middle stages of science who are present [at their teaching] would understand for themselves that they are incapable of producing something similar and would know that according to custom and law teachers do not have to be other than this. They would also likely not covet these posts themselves and the commoners (*al-ʿawām*) would not desire to occupy the posts of the scholars."[17] Just as Ibn Taġrībirdī and Ibn Iyās complained of commoners achieving high rank in the Mamluk state administration, Ibn al-Ḥāǧǧ and Tāǧ ad-Dīn as-Subkī deplore the fact that commoners have risen to teaching positions in the madrasas; and like their historian colleagues, it might well have been the blurring of formerly clear-cut cultural boundaries that most annoyed them. In Mamluk times the madrasas were indeed much more than specialized teaching institutions for an elite body of students – they had become places of teaching and piety for the neighborhood at large.[18] Commoners increasingly audited the edifying preachments and lectures on the Koran and, most of all, those sessions entailing transmission of *ḥadīṯ*.[19] Although there were sporadic attempts to prevent the broad Muslim populace (*al-ʿāmma*) from attending lessons in the madrasas,[20] this never became common practice. On the contrary, the influx of commoners apparently led to the creation of intermediate teaching positions in the madrasas. In Mamluk madrasas religious instruction was provided not only by (more or less) sophisticated scholars but there were also present simple *ḥāfiẓ*-s – those who had memorized the Quran and taught it to the people;[21] those occupying the position of *waẓīfat at-taktīb*, who taught writing to those with a desire to learn it; and there was also a special group of teachers, the *qāriʾ al-kursī*-s, which Tāǧ ad-Dīn as-Subkī describes in the chapter immediately following that on the *qāṣṣ*, the popular storyteller, in his *Muʿīd an-niqam*/The Restorer of Favors.[22] In this chapter the *qāriʾ al-kursī*-s are described as sitting on a chair in a madrasa, a mosque, or a sufi convent and teaching not by heart as did the storytellers in the streets but from books, and their public was mostly commoners and not the officially enrolled students of the madrasas. As-Subkī states that the *qāriʾ al-kursī* should refrain from teaching those books too difficult to understand for the commoners; instead, they should restrain to such books as al-Ġazzālī's *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm ad-dīn* or al-Nawawī's *Riyāḍ aṣ-ṣāliḥīn*, which would indicate that at least some of them regularly attempted to teach more difficult subject matter. It is not quite clear to what degree all these basic teachers might have been able to rise to higher positions where they might have become part of that notorious coterie which "knew to recite two or three lines of a

[16] Tāǧ ad-Dīn as-Subkī, ibid., 153. See also Leder, *Postklassisch*, 303.
[17] Tāǧ ad-Dīn as-Subkī, ibid., 153.
[18] See Berkey, *Transmission*, 182ff.
[19] Leder, *Muʿǧam*, attests to broad popular participation in the transmission of *ḥadīth* outside the madrasas in Damascus during the period 550-750 H./1155-1349.
[20] Berkey, *Transmission*, 202, cites a passage from Ibn al-Ḥāǧǧ's *Madḫal*, in which he states that, "It is desirable [that the scholar] in a *madrasa*, as has been described in a mosque, be humble and approachable to any student or any other who attends him, and that he forbid no one from among the common people [*ʿāmmat an-nās*] to approach him, because if religious knowledge is forbidden to the common people [*al-ʿāmma*], the elite [*al-ḫāṣṣa*, i. e. the *ʿulamāʾ*] will not benefit from it either."
[21] Berkey, *Transmission*, 203.
[22] Tāǧ ad-Dīn as-Subkī, *Muʿīd*, chs. 62 and 63, 162-163. See also Berkey, *Transmission*, 205ff.

book without being able to interpret them." At any rate, these minor teaching positions afforded basic instruction to large parts of the Muslim population but offered those "half-instructed" – which many high scholars continuously criticized – the possibility of earning their living at least partly within the educational system.
It would therefore seem obvious that the clear-cut dichotomy of an instructed and wealthy *ḫāṣṣa* and an ignorant and poor *ʿāmma* (which might have been more of a discourse in the sources than a social reality) in the Mamluk era must be replaced by a much more nuanced picture of society – a society in which a percentage of the commoners could indeed climb the social ladder and become more or less wealthy and educated persons.

Given the rise of the formerly excluded popular classes to a degree of wealth, it is hardly astonishing that in the historiography of the Mamluk era we notice an increased interest in daily events, in the life and culture of common people, and even in those marginal individuals among them, namely the weak and the poor.[23] We might see this as a sign that the increased exchange with the commoners in educational institutions and endowments and in sufi orders caused the elite to gradually become aware of the importance of the commoners.

The economic rise of parts of the *ʿāmma* not only implied their entry into the realms of institutional learning and teaching but the emergence of new intermediate levels of literature that were situated between the literature of the elite and that of the utterly ignorant and unlettered populace, between the Arabic *koiné* (*al-ʿarabiyya al-fuṣḥā*) and the local dialects (*ʿāmmiyya*-s), between written and oral composition, performance and transmission. As early as the twelfth century we find testimony as to the existence of lengthy heroic narratives that were destined for a broad public and which were probably recited by the popular *quṣṣāṣ* in the streets.[24] In the fourteenth century these narratives were already known as *sīra*, pl. *siyar*, and covered a large thematic range. The *siyar* narratives were composed of a synthesis of *fuṣḥā* and *ʿāmmiyya* and cyclically structured in episodes that were destined to be recited periodically, for instance every Friday or every evening at a certain time. They made use of material that was to be found in the canon of traditional elite scholarship and combined it with more popular and entertaining forms of expression. It was through this fusion that the *siyar* can be seen as a partial appropriation of "high" culture by those intermediate levels of the Mamluk society of which the authors, editors, reciters and auditors of these narratives most certainly were a part. For these intermediate "classes" of the Mamluk society the heroic *siyar* narratives not only served as night-time entertainment. By virtue of their thematic range they also represented a synthesis of content with regard to Islamic and Islamized cultures; they provided a kind of survey of almost all of Islamic and pre-Islamic culture.[25] Interestingly enough, this appropriation of certain parts of the "high" culture was not a one-way street. As seen in the example of the *Sīrat al-Malik aẓ-Ẓāhir Baybars*, a narrative which had its formative period in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries in Mamluk Egypt and

[23] See Havemann, *Chronicle of Ibn Iyās*.
[24] Narratives of ʿAntar and of Ḏāt al-Ḥimma had already been recited during the 12th century, although it is not clear whether these narratives already showed the full-fledged form of the popular *siyar* in which we know them from manuscripts dating from the 15th ct. on.
[25] See: Herzog, *Orality*, 637.

Syria,[26] not only did the authors/editors of the popular *sīra* borrow from learned biographical and historiographical literature but Mamluk historiographers most certainly borrowed from that popular heroic narrative.[27] Despite condemnations of the content of popular storytelling by prominent *ʿulamāʾ*, in the Ayyūbid and especially the Mamluk period there was increased interest on the part of people of high social standing as well as learned *ʿulamāʾ* in the narratives that the popular storytellers (*quṣṣāṣ*) recited.[28]
At the beginning of the fifteenth century, al-Maqrīzī (766-845/1364-1442) reports that evenings on Cairo's most-frequented thoroughfare, the Ḫaṭṭ Bayna l-Qaṣrāyn, found groups reciting the *siyar* und *aḫbār* and providing other kinds of entertainment: "When the days of the Fāṭimids were coming to an end … this place turned into a bazaar … a promenade where in the evening the nobles and their like walked to see the enormous multitude of candles and lanterns and everything that men long for and that delights their eye and gladdens their senses. There used to sit a number of groups, where *siyar, aḫbār* and poems were recited and where people indulged in all kinds of games and pastimes. There was such a crowd in this place that its number cannot be calculated, nor can it be related or described."[29]

All this shows that in late Ayyūbid and Mamluk times common public spaces of literary entertainment and exchange did indeed exist. This fact should not astonish us, as these places of common perception were in the end nothing less than the spatial translation of the social transformation that Arab society had undergone.

2. Three Mamluk *adab*-encyclopedias

In terms of worldviews and mentalities, one of the more interesting genres in Mamluk literature is the *adab*-encyclopedia. By comparing different works of this "genre" we will come across certain features particular to the literature of the new rising class of semi-instructed bourgeoisie.
Hillary Kilpatrick defined an *adab*-encyclopedia (which is of course an ascription to these texts, since their historical authors did not speak about whatever *mawsuʿāt adabiyya)* as being works "designed to provide the basic knowledge in those domains with which the average cultured man may be expected to be acquainted. It is characterized by organization into chapters or books on the different subjects treated so that, although there may be some overlapping of material and repetition, the various topics may be found without difficulty."[30]
The best-known *adab*-encyclopedias are pre-Mamluk: Ibn Qutayba's *ʿUyūn al-aḫbār* (ninth century), Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih's *al-ʿIqd al-farīd* (tenth century), al-Rāġib al-Iṣfahānī's *Muḥāḍarat al-udabāʾ wa-muḥāwarat aš-šuʿarāʾ wa-l-bulaġāʾ* (early eleventh century) and az-Zamaḫšarī's *Rabīʿ al-abrār wa-nuṣūṣ al-aḫbār* (eleventh/twelfth century). For the Mamluk era the best known works that can be termed *adab*-encyclopedias are an-Nuwayrī's (1279-1332) *Nihāyat al-arab fī funūn al-adab* (first third of the fourteenth century) and Ibn Faḍl

[26] See: Herzog, *Geschichte*, 393-419.
[27] Ibid., 358-392.
[28] See Leder's citation of an interesting passage in Ibn al-Aṯīr's (d. 637/1239) *al-Maṯal as-sāʾir fī adab al-kātib wa-š-šāʿir*; idem, *Postklassisch*, 291-292.
[29] Maqrīzī, *al-Mawāʿiẓ wa-l-iʿtibār* 2:28, lines 18 ff.
[30] Kilpatrick, *A genre*, 34.

Allāh al-ʿUmarī's (1301-1349) *Masālik al-abṣār fī mamālik al-amṣār* (first half of the fourteenth century). Al-Qalqašandī's (1355-1418) *Subḥ al-Aʿšā* is in some ways a borderline case, as it is more a specialized administration manual than an *adab*-encyclopedia.

Mamluk *adab*-encyclopedists such as an-Nuwayrī and Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī rely heavily on the tradition of their forerunners: Ibn Qutayba, Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih, al-Rāġib al-Iṣfahānī, az-Zamaḫšarī and a few others. The cultural synthesis of orally transmitted Arab *aḫbār* with material that was "*min kutub al-hind wa-l-ʿağam*" – still distinctly marked in Ibn Qutayba for instance – is now taken for granted; *isnād*-s mostly disappeared from the Mamluk works. Like many of their forerunners, the works of an-Nuwayrī, Ibn Faḍl Allāh and al-Qalqašandī were those of civil servants working in the Mamluk *dawāwīn* and were written for men of their own class. Like Ibn Qutayba's *ʿUyūn* and Ibn ʿAbd Rabbih's *ʿIqd*, they discuss at length the qualities of the ruler, the arts of war and peace, and administrative matters of all kind, while at the same time providing all sorts of historical and geographical information as well as that pertaining to nature.

All the aforementioned *adab*-encyclopedias shared roughly about the same method of compilation. Rosenthal listed the basic ingredients as "accumulations of aphorisms, prose mini-essays and snatches of verse rather than full-blown poems"[31] – to which we might add Qur'ānic citations and prophetic traditions, anecdotes and quotations from collections of proverbs, and histories. Because the material of older encyclopedias was recycled into the later ones, the reader has a constant feeling of déjà-vu in the sense that he recognizes a particular aphorism or poem but cannot quite say where he first ran across it.

2.1 An-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-arab*

An-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-arab* is perhaps the most systematically constructed *adab*-encyclopedia we know. His aim is to provide his reader with a comprehensive guide to the universe. An-Nuwayrī rigorously divides his work into five books (*funūn*), each of them divided into five parts (*aqsām*) that are again divided into chapters (*abwāb*). His conception of affording the reader an universal overview is reflected in the choice of subjects for the five books: cosmography and geography (*as-samāʾ*), mankind and related matters (*al-insān wa-mā yataʿallaq bihi*), animals (*al-ḥayawān aṣ-ṣāmit*) and plants (*an-nabāt*). The fifth and longest book is entirely dedicated to history (*at-taʾrīḫ*) conceived as a complete universal history.

2.2 Al-Ibšīhī's *k. al-Mustaṭraf fī kull fann mustaẓraf*

The second Mamluk *adab*-encyclopedia that I treat in this paper is of a quite different genre. *k. al-Mustaṭraf fī kull fann mustaẓraf* is a work that Thomas Bauer termed an anthology with an encyclopedic claim, whereas others do consider it an encyclopedia.[32] Anyhow, *k. al-Mustaṭraf fī kull fann mustaẓraf* ("What Is Extreme in All the Branches of Elegance") is the work of a certain Bahāʾ ad-Dīn Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Ibšīhī al-Maḥallī aš-Šāfiʿī, an Egyptian of some learning who is briefly cited in as-Saḫāwī's *aḍ-Ḍawʾ al-lāmiʿ*. He was born in 790 H./1388 in the village of Abšuwayh in the central delta province of al-Ġarbiyya, but in the first years of his life he moved to al-Maḥalla, also in the Nile delta, where his father was

[31] Thomas Bauer, "Literarische Anthologien", 101. Rosenthal, *Sources*, 15.

[32] Kilpatrick, *A genre*, 35. As these classifications are anyhow ours, Western researchers of the twenty-first century, there is perhaps not so much sense in this discussion.

appointed the preacher, *ḫaṭīb*, of a local mosque. It seems that al-Ibšīhī spent most of his life in al-Maḥalla, where he succeeded his father as *ḫaṭīb* after his pilgrimage to Mecca in his mid-twenties, about 815 H./1413. He studied the *Qurʾān* and *fiqh* in al-Maḥalla and made several trips to Cairo to take instruction there. As-Saḫāwī cites two of his masters: a certain Šihāb ad-Dīn Aḥmad b. ʿAbd Allāh b. Muḥammad aṭ-Ṭalyāwī al-Azharī aš-Šāfiʿī al-Muqriʾ, *šayḫuhu*, and al-Imām ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān b. ʿUmar b. Rislān, known as Ǧalāl al-Bulqīnī.[33] According to as-Saḫāwī, al-Ibšīhī died sometime after 850/1446 and had contact with the literati of his time (*wa-taṭāraḥa maʿa l-udabāʾ*), but his Arabic was not proficient enough to be accepted as a real *ʿālim*; as as-Saḫāwī writes, "*wa-kāna fī kalāmihi l-laḥnu kaṯīran.*"[34] Al-Ibšīhī was probably one of those "small" or "medium" *ʿulamāʾ*, men possessing a certain level of erudition but who were not part of the Mamluk Empire's intellectual elite. As will shortly be seen, the choice of topics and the worldview of al-Ibšīhīs's *adab*-encyclopedia confirms this supposition and enables us to make further suppositions regarding his social milieu.

If we compare al-Ibšīhī's encyclopedia/anthology with those of leading *ʿulamāʾ* like an-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-arab*, we recognize at once that it is much less strictly arranged and considerably shorter.[35] The chapters simply follow one another without being united by the author into larger thematic units. There is nevertheless a certain logic in al-Ibšīhī's arrangement of his 84 chapters (*abwāb*) according to subject matter.

The book starts with the first chapter treating the five pillars of Islam – *al-iḫlāṣ li-llāh, aṣ-ṣalāt, az-zakāt, aṣ-ṣawm, al-ḥaǧǧ* – and in the ensuing three chapters he addresses what for al-Ibšīhī would seem to be one of the most important and desirable qualities of men: *ʿaql, ḏakāʾ*, *ʿilm* and *adab*. Al-Ibšīhī continues in this vein in the next nine chapters (5-13), with two chapters on aphorisms and proverbs (5-6), three chapters on eloquence (*balāġa*), the mastering of a clear Arabic (*faṣāḥa*), on orators and poets and on quick-wittedness in discussions (7-9), and another four chapters on trust in God's rule, on being aware of the consequences of one's actions, that silence is often better than mindless chit-chat, etc. (10-13). This first section in which al-Ibšīhī treats intelligence, eloquence and wit covers 250 pages – about 16 percent of the book.

In the eight ensuing chapters (14-21, covering a total of 72 pages, or 5 percent of the book) al-Ibšīhī treats subjects related to government: royalty and the sultan, the sultan's entourage, viziers, chamberlains, judges, justice and injustice, and tyranny and tax collection.

The third section that I have identified is a large group of chapters which could be subsumed under the heading "*aḫlāq*", or "Morality." In twenty-three chapters (22-44) al-Ibšīhī examines actions, attitudes and character traits that he considers laudable as well as those he condemns; and as always in this *adab*-encyclopedia, he does this through a large number of citations

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[33] ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān b. ʿUmar, Ǧalāl ad-Dīn, 763/1362-824/1421, succeeded his brother Muḥammad as *qāḍī l-ʿaskar* in 791/1389. He lived in luxurious style, had a retinue of 300 mamlūks, and in 804/1401 obtained the office of Šāfiʿite Grand *qāḍī*, which he held with intervals until his death (Gibb, *al-Bulḳīnī*).

[34] As-Sakhāwī, *Ḍawʾ* 7,109:

"وتعانى النظم والتصنيف في الأدب وغيره، ولكنه لعدم إلمامه بشيء من النحو يقع فيه وفي كلامه اللحن كثيراً."

[35] The book is nevertheless a very big work (it counts in the 1999 Beirut edition three volumes with a total of some 1.500 pages) and is by the scope of its topics clearly of encyclopedic character.

from the Qurʾān, *ḥadīṯ*, and poetry and prose, both Islamic and pre-Islamic.[36] The section on "*aḫlāq*" covers a total of 493 pages, which is more than a quarter (27 percent) of the book.
Following this important group of chapters on "*aḫlāq*," the thematic scope of al-Ibšīhī's *k. al-Mustaṭraf* widens to more wordly subjects with a number of chapters on the joys of life, on wealth and poverty, and on life in society. This part of *k. al-Mustaṭraf* encompasses a large number of chapters and spans a total of 693 pages, which is some 45 percent of the 1999 edition and includes chapters on geography and flora and fauna.
Al-Ibšīhī concludes his anthology/encyclopedia with a series of chapters that I would summarize with the phrase "the misfortunes of life" and related matters. Remarkably enough, it is only in the context of illness and death – in the penultimate chapter of some 84 chapters and over roughly a dozen of the more than 1,500 pages – that al-Ibšīhī treats the subject of *zuhd*, asceticism, which was a favorite topic in countless writings of the Mamluk era.
As this brief overview shows, the work of al-Ibšīhī – a provincial *imām* of some learning, and son of a provincial *imām* who succeeded his father in his post – differs considerably in scope and choice of subjects from the *adab*-encyclopedias composed by eminent *ʿulamāʾ* in service of the state, like an-Nuwayrī and Ibn Faḍl Allāh al-ʿUmarī, themselves sons of *ʿulamāʾ*/*kuttāb*. The book is much less universal, contains no section on history, and keeps very brief the section on government. It focuses on the joys of life, on social intercourse, and on morally correct and intelligent behavior in society at large. Al-Ibšīhī's *k. al-Mustaṭraf* is the perfect guide for a man of his milieu, who required knowledge pertaining to the functioning of government, to the sultan, his viziers, the judges and tax collectors, and who needed to be conversant in a variety of topics so as to enable him to engage with local notables.

2.3 Al-Mālikī's *al-Kanz al-madfūn wa-l-fulk al-mašḥūn*

The third Mamluk *adab*-encyclopedia that I should like to discuss here, namely *al-Kanz al-madfūn wa-l-fulk al-mašḥūn*, is a work that Thomas Bauer also termed an "anthology,"[37] moreover a "popular anthology," whereas I would like to stick with the term *adab*-encyclopedia. The author of "The buried treasure and the laden ark" is a certain Yūnus al-Mālikī, who in contrast to al-Ibšīhī did not find his way into any of the known biographical dictionaries. There is a short entry in Ḥaǧǧī Ḫalīfa's *Kašf aẓ-ẓunūn*, which mentions the title and name of the author – Yūnus al-Mālikī[38] – but with no allusions to the latter's life or date of death. The book is frequently attributed to the Mamluk polygrapher Ǧalāl ad-Dīn as-Suyūṭī (849/1445 – 911/1505) – so too in the 1956 edition of Maktaba Muṣṭafā Bābī al-Ḥalabī that I am using[39] – but this attribution seems improbable owing to the character of the book. The book's author must have lived at the end of the eighth century H./fourteenth century, as he himself tells us in citing a poem praising the Prophet that a certain Abū l-ʿAbbās b. Aḥmad b. al-Muʿṭī had recited to him at *al-ḥaram aš-šarīf* in Mecca in Ḏū l-Qaʿda of the year 764

[36] The laudable or condemnable actions and attitudes cover a large array: *al-maʿrūf, al-mawadda*, aš-*šifāʿa, al-ḥayāʾ, al-kibr, al-faḫr, aš-šaraf, al-ǧūd, al-buḫl, al-ʿafw wa-l-ḥilm, al-wafāʾ, kitmān as-sirr, al-ġadr wa-l-ḫiyāna, as-sariqa, al-ḥasad, aš-šuǧāʿa wa-l-ǧihād, al-madḥ, al-hiǧāʾ, aṣ-ṣidq wa-l-kisb*.
[37] Bauer, *Literarische Anthologien*, 101.
[38] See Canova, *Un pagina*, 93-94. *Kanz*, 167, gives Yūnus al-Mālikī as author.
[39] Ziriklī, *al-Aʿlām*, also gives al-Mālikī as author.

H./August 1363.[40] He also cites a conversation on religion that he is said to have had in Šaʿbān 767/May 1366 in Jerusalem with his "brother in religion" the *qāḍī* Nāṣir ad-Dīn Muḥammad b. ʿAbd ad-Dāʾim, known as Ibn Maylaq.[41] Given these dates, the attribution to as-Suyūṭī is impossible to believe, at least for these passages. Many linguistic clues (e.g. the terms he employs, certain dialectal passages) as well as his clear focus on Egypt, would indicate that Yūnus al-Mālikī, at any rate the author must have been Egyptian. But the indication of the Nile flood in the year 854/1450[42] and to the elegy of Sultan Qāʾit Bāy[43] are clearly the work of another author, probably also Egyptian, be it as-Suyūṭī or some other unknown.[44] The book might thus be a collective work with one particular writer's name serving as a sort of catchall author.

As judged by its content, *al-Kanz al-madfūn* may well be considered an *adab*-encyclopedia, but the organization of its content differs widely from the learned *adab*-encyclopedias I presented at the beginning of my paper as well as from al-Ibšīhī's *k. al-Mustaṭraf*. We find many small, medium or long narratives, of one or two lines up to several pages, and mainly in the genres of *ḥikma, fāʾida, maṯal, nādira, ḥikāya, laġz*/enigmas; the majority of the text will be in prose, but we also frequently find *sağʿ*/rhymed prose and *šiʿr*/poetry. Among other subjects, *al-Kanz al-madfūn* covers the *Qurʾān, ḥadīṯ, fiqh, uṣūl ad-dīn*, etymology, *duʿāʾ* and other prayers for a multitude of occasions; history, mostly in the form of anecdotes or short reports; geography, zoology, botany, mostly in the form of lists of names and terms; grammar, al-Mālikī sometimes inserting whole grammatical treatises in his text; and medicine, meaning prescriptions for various diseases, aphrodisiacs, and amulets and talismans for a variety of occasions. Al-Mālikī sometimes cites at length parts of works of other, known authors such as al-Ġazālī, Ibn al-Ğawzī, Ibn Taymiyya, aṣ-Ṣafadī and Ibn Nubāta al-Miṣrī. Much of the book's information is conveyed in the form of questions and answers – e.g. "Why did such and such happen as it did?" or "Why did such and such bear such and such a name?" – and in the form of differentiations and classifications – e.g. "The difference between *a* and *b* is *c*," or, "There are fifteen names for the lion, the first one is such and such," etc.

In contrast to those *adab* encylopedias that I have hitherto discussed, the *Kanz al-madfūn* has no discernible organizing principle. Judging from the variety of subjects and the book's organization – or rather *non*-organization – it is clear that its main aim is to entertain. And this it does – particularly in consideration of the fact that the alternation from serious to light subject matter is essential to creating an entertaining encyclopedia. The book is never boring. Serious religious or juridical questions – e.g. "Why was the Quran not revealed in a single moment?" or, "How are the male and female heirs of a widow who has remarried to be treated?" – are juxtaposed with a *ḥikāya muḍḥika*, a funny story, or with entertaining enigmas.

There are two main traits characteristic of al-Mālikī's work. First, many of the subjects treated in *al-Kanz al-madfūn* relate to religion in one way or another. Second, there is one central idea behind every subject that the book touches on, whether it be religion, science, geography or etymology – namely the information should be *useful* in a practical sense, and many of the subjects are in fact introduced by the word "*fāʾida*," a useful thing. The bulk of information in

[40] Al-Mālikī, *Kanz*, 249.
[41] Ibid., 161-162.
[42] Ibid., 52-53.
[43] Ibid., 120.
[44] For the question of authorship see also: Canova, *Un pagine*, 94-95.

the book is useful for daily life – useful in order to duly fulfill one's religious duties, useful so as to assure oneself of a place in paradise, and useful for purposes of conversation. One of the important aims of the book was most certainly to arm the reader with information pertaining to a great variety of subjects so that one might participate in learned and cultivated discussions. So, from the beginning of the book on, *al-Kanz al-madfūn* is not a well-organized and learned *adab*-encyclopedia of the an-Nuwayrī or even the al-Ibšīhī type. In contrast to the ideal of an author like an-Nuwayrī, who sought to organize his subject matter as clearly and logically as possible in order to enable the reader to easily find what he was searching for, *al-Kanz al-madfūn* is simply unorganized.

3. Poverty and wealth

After having presented the three *adab*-encyclopedias, in terms of their structure and content, as what one might term elite works (an-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-arab*), as works emerging from the milieu of "small *ʿulamāʾ*" (al-Ibšīhī's *k. al-Mustaṭraf*) and as works arising from a less instructed but literate milieu (al-Mālikī's *al-Kanz al-madfūn*), I will now try to highlight the worldview of these three texts by examining one particular subject – namely the statements these texts make on poverty and the poor, on wealth and the rich, and on working and earning one's living.

In an-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-arab* this subject is treated in the second *fann*: *al-insān wa-mā yataʿallaq bihi*, in the third *qism* which begins with the laudable and reproachable attitudes of men, under the heading *al-ǧūd wa-l-karam*. This third *qism* follows the first, which treats the physical condition of men, love and genealogy, and the second *qism*, whose subject matter is the proverbs and customs of the pre-Islamic Arabs and those of the Prophet Muḥammad. What is interesting in an-Nuwayrī's presentation of poverty and the poor, is firstly that he treats them in thematic proximity to that larger part of his second *fann* devoted to the ancient Arabs and their customs, and secondly that he treats poverty in the context of *al-ǧūd wa-l-karam*. Poverty and the poor are not subjects to which he devotes an independent chapter in his encyclopedia; instead an-Nuwayrī treats the subject as part of the question of generosity and its opposite *buḫl*, generosity being one of the more prominent and positive ways in which a pre-Islamic freeman Arab could prove his *murūʾa*, or virility.
An-Nuwayrī begins this chapter with two Qurʾānic verses on generosity,[45] these then followed by a couple of *aḥādīṯ* from the prophet Muḥammad: "Generosity (*al-ǧūd*) stems from the generosity of God, so be generous and God will be generous toward you."[46] And in the same vein: "Generosity is one of paradise's trees, its branches hang down to the earth. Whoever seizes one of these, I will have him enter into paradise."[47] Consequently, the believer should not fear poverty, because God will rescue him: "Exceed in . . . generosity because God . . .

[45] "You will not attain piety until you expend of what you love" (Sūrat Āl ʿImrān (3), 92) and: "And preferring others above themselves, even though poverty be their portion. And whoso is guarded against the avarice of his own soul, those – they are the prosperers" Transl. Arberry, *Koran Interpreted*.
قال الله عز وجل: "لن تنالوا البر حتى تنفقوا مما تحبون" (سورة آل عمران: 92) وقال تعالى: "ويؤثرون على أنفسهم ولو كان بهم خصاصةٌ ومن يوق شح نفسه فأولئك هم المفلحون"((سورة الحشر: 9). النويري, نهاية الأرب, ج 3, ص. 205
[46] قال صلى الله عليه وسلم: "الجود من جود الله تعالى فجودوا يجود الله عليكم". النويري, نهاية الأرب, ج 3, ص. 204. "
[47] النويري, نهاية الأرب, ج 3, ص. 204. "ألا أن السَخاء شجرةٌ في الجنة أغصانُها متدلِّية في الأرض فمن تعلّق بغُصن منها أَدْخَله الجنة."

takes [the generous man] by his hand whenever he stumbles, and opens [the way for] him whenever he is impoverished."[48] Conversely, avarice precipitates men into poverty, and an-Nuwayrī cites Akṯam b. aṣ-Ṣayfī, "*ḥakīm al-ʿarab*": "Do not believe in avarice, it [only] hastens poverty."[49] After quite a long chapter on generosity in pre-Islamic times, where an-Nuwayrī cites a number of stories on famous pre-Islamic warriors and generous men such as Ḥātim aṭ-Ṭāʾī,[50] an-Nuwayrī touches again on the subject of poverty and wealth when he treats avarice. An-Nuwayrī not only cites *aḥādīṯ* of the prophet Muḥammad stating that avarice is incompatible with belief[51] and that the avaricious will not enter paradise[52] but he cites the Greek philosopher Socrates in his statement that "rich and avaricious men are at the same level as mules and donkeys – they are burdened with gold and silver and they eat straw and barley."[53] An-Nuwayrī explicitly makes the point about avarice in citing two anonymous voices that represent the mainstream of classical Arab thinking[54] when they respectively state that "an avaricious individual does not merit being called a free man because he is owned by his wealth (*māl*)"[55] and that no wealth belongs to the avaricious man "because he belongs to his wealth."[56] By insisting on the fact that avarice makes men prisoners to their wealth, an-Nuwayrī's statements on avarice dovetail with the main "non-religious" argument that we find in the classical, pre-Mamluk elite literature against poverty: poverty is negative mainly because it strips a free man of his liberty.[57] An-Nuwayrī ends his treatment of *buḫl* by citing quite a large number of stories about avaricious individuals, these compiled from al-Ğāhiẓ's *k. al-Buḫalāʾ* and other sources. In the section "How the Avaricious Justify Their Avarice,"[58] this vision of poverty is clearly expressed in a phrase attributed to Abū Ḥanīfa: "There is no good in the one who does not protect his wealth in order to protect his honor, to care for those for whom he is responsible, and to avoid the worst type of people."[59] This mainstream view of poverty, mendicancy and avarice is conclusively brought home in a poem by Ibn al-Muʿtazz: "I blame: avarice is not my nature / but I saw poverty being a worse way/path / Indeed, death is better for a man than avarice / but avarice is better than begging from the avaricious."[60]

To sum up, one can say that an-Nuwayrī treats poverty very much from the perspective of a wealthy Arab Muslim gentleman. Poverty and wealth are seen from the perspective of the

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[48] "تجاوزوا عن ذنب السّخِيّ فإن الله عزّ وجلّ آخذ بيده كلّما عثر وفابحٌ له كلّما افتقر". النويري, نهاية الأرب, ج 3, ص. 204.

[49] "ولا تعتقدوا البخل، لتعجلوا الفقر، أخذه الشاعر فقال: أمن خوف فقر تعجلتـه \ وأخرت إنفاق ما تجمـع \ فصرت الفقير وأنت الغني \ وما كنت تعدو الذي تصنع". النويري, نهاية الأرب, ج 3, ص. 205.

[50] An-Nuwayrī, Ibid., Vol. 3, 208 ff.

[51] "قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم: "خصلتان لا تجتمعان في مؤمن: البخل وسوء الخلق". النويري, نهاية الأرب, ج 3, ص. 295.

[52] "فقال الله عز وجل (للجنة): أنت حرام على كل بخيل". النويري, نهاية الأرب, ج 3, ص. 295.

[53] " وقال سقراط: الأغنياء البخلاء، بمنزلة البغال والحمير، تحمل الذهب والفضة، وتعتلف التبن والشعير.". النويري, نهاية الأرب, ج 3, ص. 295.

[54] See: Herzog, *Figuren der Bettler*, 72-73.

[55] "وقالوا: البخيل لا يستحق اسم الحرية، فإن ماله يملكه". النويري, نهاية الأرب, ج 3, ص. 296.

[56] " ويقال: لا مال للبخيل، وإنما هو لماله". النويري, نهاية الأرب, ج 3, ص. 296.

[57] We find this argument not very explicitly at the beginning of al-Nuwayrī's chapter on generosity (an-Nuwayrī, ibid., 3:205): „The generous is the one who gives from his wealth, but protects himself from [depending on] the wealth of others":
"وقال بعض الحكماء: الجواد من جاد بماله وصان نفسه عن مال غيره. وقيل لعمرو بن عبيد: ما الكرم؟ فقال: أن تكون بمالك متبرعا، وعن مال غيرك متورعا".

[58] احتجاج البخلاء وتحسينهم للبخل. النويري, نهاية الأرب, ج 3, ص. 314.

[59] "وقال أبو حنيفة: لا خير فيمن لا يصون ماله ليصون به عرضه، ويصل به رحمه ويستغني به عن لئام الناس". النويري, نهاية الأرب, ج 3, ص. 315.

[60] "قال عبد الله بن المعتز: أعاذل ليس البخل مني سـجـيةً \ ولكن وجدت الفقر شر سبـيل \ لموت الفتى خيرٌ من البخل للفتى \ وللبخل خيرٌ من سؤال بـخـيل". النويري, نهاية الأرب, ج 3, ص. 315.

charitable (*al-ǧūd wa-l-karam*) or uncharitable, avaricious (*buḫl*) person who possesses a certain wealth. In the end, poverty and charity are for him mainly questions of status in society. Poverty is humiliating because of the dependence it entails, therefore it must be avoided, whereas charity merits honor.

The second author, al-Ibšīhī, takes a more straightforward attitude toward wealth and poverty. He treats these subjects in that part of his book which I have termed "The Joys of Life." Here he dedicates three chapters (51-53) to subjects closely related to our question – *Bāb ḏikr al-ġinā wa-ḥubb al-māl wa-l-iftiḫār bi-ǧamʿihā*, a chapter on "Wealth and Money, the Love of Money, and Boasting of its Accumulation"; *Bāb ḏikr al-faqr wa-madḥihi*, a chapter on "Poverty and in Praise of Poverty"; and *Bāb fī t-talaṭṭuf fī s-suʾāl wa-ḏikr man suʾila fa-ǧād*, a chapter on "The Correct Treatment of Beggars." Very interesting here is the space that al-Ibšīhī allots the various chapters in his book. Whereas the chapter on "Wealth and Money, the Love of Money, and Boasting of Its Accumulation" covers in the Beirut 1999 edition 17 pages, the chapter on "Poverty and in Praise of Poverty" is only 6 pages long, and the chapter on "The Correct Treatment of Beggars" takes up 14 pages.

Al-Ibšīhī begins his chapter on wealth and the rich with the well-known Quranic verse – "*al-mālu wa-l-bunūna zīnatu l-ḥayāti d-dunyā*/Wealth and sons are the ornaments of the worldly life"[61] – and then adduces an anonymous (*qīlā*) citation: "*al-faqr raʾs kull balāʾ wa-dāʿiya li-maqt an-nās*/Poverty is the fount of all vices and pushes mankind to hatred."[62] Then al-Ibšīhī cites another reason why wealth is positive and poverty is not: "Poverty also robs virility and shame. When a man is stricken by poverty, he must give up his shame; and he who loses his shame, loses his virility (*murūʾa*); and he who loses his virility is hated; and he who is hated is despised. A man who ends up in this situation can say whatever he likes, but it will always be used against him."[63] So the first thing al-Ibšīhī does when he addresses wealth and poverty is to underscore the fact that *māl* means *murūʾa* and that poverty means the loss of honor. We can find similar statements in many *adab*-encyclopedias, such as an-Nuwayrī's *Nihāyat al-arab* or in Ibn Qutaiba's *ʿUyūn al-akhbār* and other classical works – but these authors do not place it right at the beginning of their argument.

After these introductory words, al-Ibšīhī continues in the same vein, citing what he says to be a *ḥadīṯ* of the Prophet Muḥammad:[64] "There is no good in a man who does not love wealth (or money: *māl*) to provide for his relatives,[65] to assure his independence and to be free from others (literally: from God's creation)."[66] Al-Ibšīhī then spends another six pages citing poetry, mostly from az-Zamḫšarī's *Rabīʿ al-abrār* and from the *Taḏkira* of Ibn Ḥamdūn. If ever one had expected from the title of al-Ibšīhī's fifty-first chapter "*Bāb ḏikr al-ġinā wa-*

[61] Q: 18, 46.
[62] Al-Ibšīhī, *k. al-Mustaṭraf*, 2:268.
[63] Ibid.
"وهو مع ذلك مسلبة للمروءة, مذهبة للحياء, ومن فقد حياءه فقد مروءته, ومن فقد مروءته مُقِتَ, ومن مقت أزْدُرِيَ به, ومن صار كذلك صار كلامه عليه ولا له"
[64] I could not identify this phrase being a *ḥadīṯ* of the Prophet Muḥammad. Ibrāhīm Sāliḥ, the editor of the 1999 Beirut edition, marks in his footnote, that *at-Taḏkira al-muḥammadiyya* which is one al-Ibšīhī's possible sources here, attributes the saying to Saʿīd b. Musayyib, and that al-*ʿIqd al-farīd* attributes it to a "*ḥakīm*", a sage. It seems to be a variation of the statement cited by al-Nuwayrī, who attributes it to Abū Ḥanīfa (see FN 59).
[65] رحِمَه: the relatives from the side of the mother, so those one has to protect.
[66] Al-Ibšīhī, *k. al-Mustaṭraf*, 2:268:
"لا خيرَ لمن لا يحبّ المال لِيصلَ به رَحِمَه ويُؤَدِّي به أمانتَه ويَستغني به عن خلب ربّه".

ḥubb al-māl wa-l-iftiḫār bi-ğamʿihā" that there would be long passages condemning "*ḥubb al-māl wa-l-iftiḫār bi-ğamʿihā*/the love of wealth and boasting of its accumulation," one is definitely disappointed. Except for some brief verse at the end of the chapter, none of the numerous poems that al-Ibšīhī compiles in his chapter condemn in the slightest the love of wealth and its accumulation.[67] To the contrary, in his compilation there are two lengthy prose sections that interrupt what might have been some very conventional "*al-madḥ wa-ḏ-ḏamm*/praise and condemnation." The first section – "*fīmā ğāʾ fī l-iḥtirāz ʿalā l-māl*/What has been said on the protection of wealth" – discusses the tricks and stratagems that people employ so as to snatch one's money and how to unmask these con artists and thieves; and the second section – "*nubḏa min aḏ-ḏaḫāʾir wa-t-tuhaf*/The most excellent treasures and bijous" – describes the fabulous treasures and jewelry that kings and sultans have possessed throughout history. Whereas the second prose section covers three pages and is mainly compiled from the *k. aḏ-Ḏaḫāʾir wa-t-tuhaf* by Ibn al-Zubayr, the first section on hustlers and thieves covers three and a half pages and seems not to be citations from other authors or a summary compilation of other works (the editor of the 1999 edition found no trace of citation or compilation, neither did I.) It would indeed seem that al-Ibšīhī wrote these pages without any external assistance. Al-Ibšīhī presents a kind of taxonomy of different groups of money-grabbers: "It has been said that the owner of wealth must keep and protect it from the rapacious (*al-muṭmaʿīn*), the betrayers (*al-mubarṭaḥīn*[68]), the liars and those who embellish their talk (*al-mumarḫiqīn wa-l-mumawwiḥīn*[69]) and from those who hide their real intentions (*al-mutanammisīn*)."[70] As for the rapacious, they flatter the rich and wealthy and offer them perfect "investment occasions" or try to engage them in treasure-finding projects, which of course all end up with the rich investor losing his money. As for the betrayers, they gain the rich man's confidence through the steady and loyal service of selling and buying for him – and then when he has delegated all his transactions to them, they secretly strip the wealthy man of his money. As for *al-mumarkhiqūn* (or *al-muḥtarifūn wa-l-muwaḥḥimūn* in the 1999 Ṣaydā edition), the liars, they present themselves as having acquired great wealth through certain investment strategies and bamboozle their victims into thinking that they can make similar profits by entrusting the swindler with their own monies. Finally, al-Ibšīhī presents *al-mutanammisīn*, hypocrites, those who hide their real intentions, who cloak themselves in piety and pretend to renounce the world in order to become guardians of individual testaments and of other money that must needs be safeguarded. They are, al-Ibšīhī concludes, worse than the brigands and bandits; the naïve individual is on guard against the latter, but the former they foolishly trust.[71]

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[67] See below p. 17 the poem attributed to a Bedouin.

[68] I could not find the word "*mubarṭaḥ*" in any of the Arabic dictionaries I consulted, my translation "betrayer" comes from the description al-Ibšīhī gives of "*al-mubarṭaḥūn*".

[69] The 1999 Ṣaydā edition (ed. Darwīš al-Ğuwaydī) has here: „*al-muḥtarifūn wa-l-muwaḥḥimūn*".

[70] Al-Ibšīhī, *k. al-Mustaṭraf*, 2:268.

"فقد قالوا: ينبغي لصاحب المال أن يحترز ويحفظه من المُطْمَعينَ والمُبَرْطِحين والمُمَخْرِقين والمُموِحن والمُتَنَمِّسين."

[71] Al-Ibšīhī seems to have composed these pages himself and they were apparently intended to warn wealthy people against those who sought to steal their money. In a way they resemble ʿAbd ar-Raḥmān al-Ğawbarī's *Kašf al-asrār*. But just as al-Ğawbarī – who was apparently less educated than al-Ibšīhī – cannot be called a "small *ʿālim*" (he is not to be found in any biographical dictionary; see Höglmeier, *Al-Jawbarī*, 31 ff.), his reading public may have been less wealthy than those wealthy men (*ṣāḥib al-māl*) who al-Ibšīhī warns against those seeking to trap them into making fraudulent investments.

Following these pages, which in no way question the legitimacy of "the love of wealth and boasting of its accumulation," al-Ibšīhī still does not conclude his chapter by addressing the subject of money and those who love it but presents a long passage on treasures, precious stones, gold, silver, etc., that is taken from Ibn az-Zubayr's *k. aḏ-Ḏaḫāʾir wa-t-tuhaf*. Interestingly enough, he begins his chapter by noting – this also to be found in *Aḫbār Makka* by al-Azraqī[72] – the treasure that the Prophet Muḥammad was said to have found in the cave of the Kaʿba when he conquered Mecca and which was also said to have been 70,000 ounces or the equivalent of 1,990,000 dinars; and then he continues by elaborating the various treasures obtained during the wars with the Persians and the Byzantines. The whole chapter maintains a serious and even admiring tone, and there is no critique whatsoever of money and wealth. Only at the very end of the chapter on wealth and money does al-Ibšīhī cite a (single) poem stating that all the goods of this world (*dunyā*) are doomed to perish (*a-laisa masīr ḏālika li-z-zawwāl?*).[73] So, in seventeen pages of praising wealth and money, al-Ibšīhī cites only this one short poem, which represents a different voice, and in all likelihood simply to serve as segué to the next and much shorter chapter praising poverty.

Al-Ibšīhī begins his chapter on the praise of poverty with the Qurʾānic verse, "No indeed; surely Man waxes insolent, for he thinks himself self-sufficient,"[74] which is for him an indication that wealth (*ġinā*) is condemnable if it leads to tyranny and disobedience of God. Al-Ibšīhī then goes on to cite some of the numerous *aḥādiṯ* in which the Prophet is said to have valued poverty and the poor – as in the well-known but disputed *ḥadīṯ*: "O my God, let me die as a poor man and not as a rich one, and gather me in the group of the poor/*fī ǧamra al-masākīn.*"[75] But unlike his section on wealth and money (except for the last poem), al-Ibšīhī vitiates his praise of poverty by compiling statements like: "One of the prayers of the first Muslims (*salaf*) was: 'O God I take refuge with you from the humiliation of poverty and the vanity of wealth.'"[76] In other citations in his chapter "In Praise of Poverty," al-Ibšīhī indirectly reassures his readers that it is not possessions and money that are evil but only money gained through illegitimate means[77] and that poverty is grace from God which he only bestows on those nearest him, on his *awliyāʾ*: "The Prophet has said: 'Poverty is one of the graces of God, for he only bestows it on those closest to him.'"[78] In Mamluk times the term *walī* was used for "saintly" people who were said to have special powers by virtue of their special relationship to God, so a Mamluk reader of al-Ibšīhī's book might very well understand this *ḥadīṯ* the other way around, meaning that if God hadn't chosen him for poverty then it was because he was not a *walī* of God but just an ordinary believer. Not everybody, al-Ibšīhī seems to be saying here, can be a "saintly" person and has to lead an impoverished existence. Significantly enough, al-Ibšīhī concludes his chapter on poverty by

[72] Al-Ibšīhī, *k. al-Mustaṭraf*, 2:280.
[73] "حب الدنيا تقاد إليك عفواً \ أليس مصير ذلك للزوال": Al-Ibšīhī, Ibid., 2:284.
[74] "كلا إن الانسان ليطغى إن راه استغنى", Q: 96, 6-7. English Translation: Arberry, *Koran Interpreted*.
[75] Al-Ibšīhī, *k. al-Mustaṭraf*, 2:286. See also: Ibn Taymiyya, *Aḥadīṯ al-quṣṣāṣ*, *ḥadīṯ* no. 50, p. 101.
[76] "أَللهمَّ إنّي أعوذ بك من ذل الفقر وبطر الغنى", al-Ibšīhī, ibid., 2:289.
[77] "وقيل مكتوبٌ على باب مدينة الرقة: ويل لمن جمع المال من غير حقة", al-Ibšīhī, ibid., 2:289.
[78] "الفقر موهبة من مواهب الله, فلا يختاره إلا لأوليائه", al-Ibšīhī, Ibid., 2:286.

citing a Bedouin (*aʿrābī*): "He who has been born in poverty will have wealth render him arrogant; he who has been born in wealth will only be humble with more wealth."[79]
The last of these three chapters is one discussing begging and the correct treatment of beggars. In this last chapter, which is quite long (14 pages), we find statements like the famous *ḥadīṯ* "*ātu s-sāʾila wa-law kāna ʿalā farasin*/Give to the beggar, even if he is on horseback," but al-Ibšīhī gives over much space to condemnations of begging. If we recall the small amount of space that he gives to asceticism/*zuhd* in the penultimate chapter of his book, we can see that al-Ibšīhī was certainly no advocate of voluntary poverty as the way of God. In my view, his book quite clearly represents the mentality of "middle-class" men of some wealth: merchants, craftsmen, shopkeepers. I think it safe to assume that he wrote his book with a public in mind that was very much like the notables of al-Mahalla, where he and his father had been *imām*.

Coming now to the third and final *adab*-encyclopedia that I want to highlight in this paper, the mentality or ideology of Yūnus al-Mālikī's *al-Kanz al-madfūn* with respect to money and poverty differs again from that of an-Nuwayrī's work and from that which we can find in al-Ibšīhī's *k. al-Mustaṭraf*, and I am very much tempted to attribute this variation to the differing social background of al-Mālikī.[80] In fact, al-Mālikī's attitude toward wealth and money as well as poverty and asceticism is very much a petit bourgeois one. The attitude that al-Mālikī (or whoever might have written the book or parts of it)[81] adopts toward wealth and poverty is unlike an-Nuwayrī's Arab Muslim "gentleman"'s attitude or al-Ibšīhī's "middle-class" one in which contentment is privileged. In al-Mālikī's book, terms such as *riḍā* and *qanāʿa* (contentment) form the basis of a wise and virtuous man's behavior. Typical aphorisms or proverbs are: "He who is content with what is bestowed (by God), is also patient in the moment of distress,"[82] or, "The best wealth (*māl*) is that which makes you richer, and better than that is the one that suffices you,"[83] or, "O how ugly is servility if one is in need and how ugly is arrogance if one needs no help. It is said: The fruit of contentment is peace (of the soul)."[84]
The *al-Kanz al-madfūn* clearly does not advocate a mendicant life without work, and it cites the following proverb, "Better than begging is facing the difficulties of life,"[85] and it states that one has to earn one's money in an honest way without begging: "The best subsistence is the one which is not stained when gained and which is not sullied by the ignominy and

[79] "وقال أعرابي: من ولد في الفقر أبطره الغنى، ومن ولد في الغنى لم يزده إلا تواضعاً", al-Ibšīhī, ibid., 290. Bedouins who at all times knew poverty very well, have generally not valued this state. Pre-Islamic Bedouin poetry which forms a considerable part of many classical *adab*-encyclopedias, generally largely praises wealth.
[80] Given the fact that al-Mālikī is cited in none of the biographical dictionaries, which is perhaps indicative of why Ḥaǧǧī Ḫalīfa only cites the title of the book and the name of al-Mālikī without indicating his date of death; and given the numerous passages which differ both grammatically and lexically from the norm of the Arabic *koïné*; and given the naïve character of the work – we have to presume that al-Mālikī came from a less educated and wealthy milieu than the likes of al-Ibšīhī.
[81] See above, p. 11.
[82] Al-Mālikī, *al-Kanz*, p. 97, line 22: "من رضي بالقضاء صبر على البلاء"
[83] Ibid., p. 16, line 1: " خير المال ما أغناك وخير منه ما أكفاك"
[84] Ibid., p. 9, line 1: " ما أقبح الخضوع عند الحاجة, والتكبر عند الاستغناء. يقال: ثمرة القناعة الراحة ". A similar idea is expressed by the following: "He who is content with what is sufficient (with that which God has bestowed on him) has no need of most people." p. 97, line 14: " من قنع باليسير من الرزق استغنى من كثير من الخلق"
[85] Ibid., p. 45, line 7: "أحسن من السؤال ركوب الأحوال"

servility of begging."[86] Although *al-Kanz al-madfūn* at times shows understanding for the distress of the poor – "It is most astonishing that the one who is poor and has a family to provide for does not throw himself on the notables (*an-nās*) with a knife (in his hand)"[87] – his essential attitude is expressed by aphorisms like the following: "Honesty/chastity is the ornament of the poor and thankfulness is the ornament of the rich."[88] *Al-Kanz al-madfūn* also assures the impoverished that a poor but righteous man is often better than a vile rich one: "Chosroes has said: 'Stinginess is worse than poverty, for when the poor man gets something he is content, whereas the rich man, if he gets something, is never content'."[89] At any rate, *al-Kanz al-madfūn* comforts its readers when placing money and wealth in the context of *ad-dunyā*, that world which is doomed to perish and therefore of no real importance other than being the antechamber of *al-āḫira*, which is the real world after this one: "The ignorant man wants to acquire wealth, whereas the intelligent man wants to acquire completion. Be abstinent from that which does not subsist and cling yourself to that which persists."[90] Worldly power, like wealth, is not to be desired – it mostly brings trouble and strife: "Being a prince means first to be blamed, than to regret, and finally torture on the Day of Resurrection."[91] Pious people should therefore stay far away from the centers of power, as does the ascetic in the following citation: "An ascetic once looked at the door of the king and said: an iron door, death already prepared, fierce dispute and travel far away."[92] So *al-Kanz al-madfūn* provides its reader with a quietist moral, and his petit-bourgeois ideology is perhaps best characterized by the statement: "He who wishes to remain at peace, does not expose himself and leaves courage alone/من أراد البقاء والسلامة فليدع الاقدام والشجاعة".[93]

Finally, all three anthologies/encyclopedias that I have cited in this paper are far removed from those radical sufi attitudes whose traces we can find in the heresy-graphical writings of *ʿulamāʾ* such as Ibn Taymiyya and in a number of sufi manuscripts. I am presently investigating several of the more interesting manuscripts, but that would be an entirely other paper.

[86] Ibid., p. 56, line 16: "خير الرزق ما سلم من الآثام في الأكتساب, والذل والخضوع عند السؤال"
[87] Ibid., p. 95, line 7: "قال بعض الحكماء: إني لأعجب ممن له عيال كثيرة وهو فقير كيف لا يخرج على النس بالسيف"
[88] Ibid., p. 9, line 12 "العفاف زينة الفقير, الشكر زينة الغني"
[89] Ibid., p. 69, line 20: " قال كسرى: الشح أضر من الفقر. لأن الفقير إذا وجد شبع, والشحيح لا يشبع أبدا"
[90] Al-Mālikī, al-Kanz, p. 18, line 17: "الجاهل يطلب المال, والعاقل يطلب الكمال. ازهد فيما يزول, واعتقل لنفسك ما يدوم"
[91] Al-Mālikī, al-Kanz, p. 110, line 15: "الامارة أولها ملامة. وثانيها ندامة. وثلاثها عذاب يوم القيامة"
[92] Al-Mālikī, al-Kanz, p. 54, line 12: "نظر زاهد إلى باب الملك, فقال: باب حديد,وموت عتيد , ونزع شديد, وسفر بعيد"
[93] Al-Mālikī, Ibid., 94.

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